

WITH THE FARMERS

By Prof. W. F. MASSEY

Wednesday, September 10, 1913.

Sundry Questions.

Clarke County: "I have just read your reply in The Times-Dispatch to my questions on the orchard in the issue of the 21st. I shall file the article for future reference. Now can you answer a few more through The Times-Dispatch, and I will long continue with the paper. We do not, as a rule, get the corn and fodder from the land till the last of November or December. Is that not late to sow the seed you mention? Give the analysis of the acid phosphate you suggest? What is tankage, and where can I get it, and what is the best and where to get it? Should the ground be harrowed after the seed is sown? You surely cut and shock corn before the last of November, and the land can then be prepared, with the exception of the spots, on which the shocks stand. It is the common practice in all sections where winter grain or grass follows corn, to prepare and sow the land with the corn shocks standing. You should get the grass seed in during October. The acid phosphate I mentioned should be the kind that has 16 per cent of phosphoric acid available. Tankage is the steamed and dried refuse from the great slaughterhouses of the West. You can use cottonseed meal instead with as good effect. Tall Meadow Fescue is a grass that is commonly grown under the name of Randall grass in Southwest Virginia. You can get the fertilizer from any dealer in fertilizers in Richmond or Baltimore. You can get the grass seed mentioned from any of the leading seedmen. I cannot name any dealers here. After sowing the seed, brush it in with a smoothing harrow, that is, a harrow with the teeth slanting backwards, and if the soil is dry, it will be a good thing to roll it to press the soil to the seed. You can sow the mixture of seed with the grass seed attachment to a drill.

Renting Land.

"You have mentioned the Maryland tenant system, in which the tenant has all the hay and fodder and straw free so long as he feeds it on the farm. What part of the crops does the landlord get? I am thinking of trying this plan, and would like to know more about it."

The system that has proved profitable to landowner and tenant alike was started by a merchant more than thirty years ago, and he accumulated in his farm an estate of fifty-six farms, averaging 270 acres, and the tenants have made money, while the fertility of the land has been maintained and improved. The whole secret is that all the clover (and the tenant is compelled to grow clover) and all the fodder and straw are fed on the land, and the farm gets the manure while the tenants make the feeding of stock profitable. The farmer is paid on a system that is put down in the written contract, and no tenant is moved so long as he farms on the contract. You can get a full account of this system by asking the Secretary of Agriculture in Washington for a copy of farmers' bulletin entitled "A Tenant System and Its Results." The landowner gets half the grain crops.

Clarke County: "How much lime should I sow to the acre on wheat, and where can I buy it? Please reply in The Times-Dispatch. You seem to think that lime is applied as a fertilizer, and it is not used as a fertilizer for wheat or any other crop, but for restoring the sweetness of acid soil, promoting the nitrification of organic decay in the soil, and having effect on the mechanical texture of the soil, making a heavy soil looser and a sandy soil more compact. Now, I do not know whether your land needs lime, and you are the only one who can find out. Get some slips of blue litmus paper at a drug store. Put a slip in some wet soil and let it remain in the soil half an hour, and if it has then turned pink, it shows that the soil is acid and needs lime. If you are turning under a pea stubble or have broken a clover fallow for the wheat, it will answer to spread 1,000 pounds of slaked lime an acre and harrow it in before drilling the wheat. There are lime dealers at Riverport and Staunton who can supply the lime. Get the fresh lump lime and slake it for yourself to a powder, as the lime will more than double in bulk in slaking, and you save freight in getting the lump lime. You say nothing about the previous crops on the land, and I have only to guess what they are. I believe that the State is now preparing to furnish ground limestone to the farmers cheaply, and you can learn of this by writing to the warden of the penitentiary, Richmond, Va. You can use the ground limestone at rate of a ton an acre safely, but for immediate effect on the soil I prefer the burnt lime.

Fertilizer in a Fire. Vance County, N. C.: "I am much interested in your correspondence in The Times-Dispatch. I think what you do not know about farming is not worth knowing. I have three and a half tons of 3-8-3 fertilizer in a log barn that was burned. The fertilizer was piled in a solid bulk about four sacks deep. But the fire was very hot, and I know much damage must have been done, and probably the ammonia driven off by the heat. Do you think that this burnt fertilizer will do much good on corn? Are the bone and potash much hurt? The quantity and weight did not seem diminished. I then some mixed one-third with cottonseed meal under corn, and do not think it is doing well."

You are entirely too flattering. I do not know it all by a great deal. In fact, when I was a young man I had a notion that I knew a great deal more than I know now, for I have had to unlearn a great many things, and found out that many things I thought I knew were not so. And so we all, who have been students of the soil and crops, year after year of learning more. The men who think they know all about farming are generally the poorest farmers we have, for the man who is studying his profession is always finding out how little he really knows. I am an old man, and naturally have learned from long experience more than some younger men. But every generation is learning more and more as the investigation of scientific men are carried on. Now, as to that burnt fertilizer: In your letter you constantly call it guano.

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WHEAT IS BUMPER; SHORTAGE IN CORN

Government Crop Report Shows Drought Has Had General Effect.

TEXAS FARES VERY WELL

She Holds Her Own in Corn, While Other Western States Fare Rather Badly.

Washington, September 8.—An enormous loss in the prospective production of corn and indications of the biggest wheat crop ever produced were features of the government September crop report issued this afternoon.

Hot weather and drought in a number of the principal corn growing States during the month ending September 1 caused a deterioration of corn, which experts calculate has resulted in the loss of 321,000,000 bushels, reducing the corn crop estimates to 2,351,000,000 bushels. The destructive crop weather caused a loss of about 300,000,000 bushels during July, and the August loss brought the total up to 621,000,000 bushels since the first estimates of corn crop prospects were made by the government.

Texas, alone of the great corn States, held her own during August. Nebraska was hardest hit, the deterioration there during the month amounting to 30 per cent, bringing the condition of the crop to 37 per cent of a normal. The loss in Missouri was 29 per cent, the crop being 41 per cent of a normal.

Kansas reported a condition of 19 per cent of a normal, the lowest ever recorded, and a loss of 20 per cent during the month. Illinois, with the greatest acreage of any State planted to corn, reported a condition of 33 per cent, a loss of 10 per cent, and reported 78 per cent, a loss of 9 per cent; Oklahoma, 39 per cent, a loss of 5 per cent.

Big Wheat Crop.

Never before in the history of the country has there been such a bountiful wheat harvest as has been gathered this year. This was due principally to the bumper crop of winter wheat. To-day's government estimate of spring wheat showed increased prospects for that crop, making the total production 2,120,000,000 bushels, or an increase of 4.3 per cent over the August estimate. This increase brought the estimate of the total crop of the country to 754,000,000 bushels, or 6,000,000 bushels more than the great record crop of 1901.

Oats prospects, too, showed an increase of 3.7 per cent, as a result of the conditions existing during August, and the crop now is estimated at 1,366,000,000 bushels, or 38,000,000 bushels more than predicted in August. Weather conditions during August caused a deterioration, which is estimated to have resulted in the loss of 14,000,000 bushels of oats, 35,000,000 pounds of tobacco and 1,000,000 tons of hay. Barley, flax and rice seem to have escaped damaging weather, the prospects during August having remained unchanged.

Little Relief Is Felt.

Little relief from the continued heat and drought is placed out by the Weather Bureau, which to-day reported that the week since the crop report was taken was generally one of the warmest ever known in the corn growing States, that little beneficial rain had fallen, and that the severe drought continued very general.

Crop Report.

The crop report issued to-day announced the following: Corn—condition, 65.1 per cent of a normal; indicated yield, 22.0 bushels per acre; estimated total production, 2,351,000,000 bushels. Spring wheat—condition, 75.3; yield, 13.0; production, 243,000,000. Oats—condition, 74.0; yield, 27.8; production, 1,366,000,000. Barley—condition, 73.4; yield, 23.2; production, 168,000,000. Buckwheat—condition, 75.4; yield, 18.2; production, 15,000,000. White potatoes—condition, 69.9; yield, 88.1; production, 325,000,000. Tobacco—condition, 74.5; yield, 752.4 pounds; production, 861,000,000 pounds. Flax—condition, 74.9; yield, 8.4; production, 29,000,000. Rice—condition, 88.0; yield, 32.8; production, 27,000,000. Hay—preliminary estimate of production, 63,000,000 tons; quality 91.7. Apples—condition, 47.7.

"REAPPEARANCE OF GHOST OF MALTHUS"

Colorado Springs, Col., September 9.—More than 200 physicians and scientists were in attendance at the forty-first annual convention of the American Health Association, which opened here to-day. Carl L. Alsberg, head of the Bureau of Chemistry, of the Department of Agriculture, spoke on "The Implications of the Federal Food Law." He was followed by Dr. W. T. Sedgewick, of Boston, professor of biology and public health in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who discussed "The Reappearance of the ghost of Malthus."

To Attend Knoxville Congress.

Washington, September 9.—Under a resolution passed to-day, Speaker Clark appointed a committee of fourteen members of the House to attend the Conservation Congress, soon to be held at Knoxville, Tenn.

Will Build Concrete Road.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.] Farmville, Va., September 9.—Under the supervision of the State Highway Commissioner, the Board of Supervisors of Prince Edward, will construct about one mile of concrete road leading south from Farmville. This is said to be the first experiment with this material for a highway in the State. The contract was let yesterday to a Richmond construction company, which will commence work on or about September 15.

Five Years for Bigamy.

Bristol, Va., September 9.—James Chapman, a Bristol man, to-day was sentenced in the Corporation Court to five years in the Virginia Penitentiary on a charge of bigamy. The evidence showed that he was married to Jennie Whitakers was his wife. A similar case, that of J. C. Elliott, is pending here. Elliott, who in jail, has it is alleged, three or four wives.

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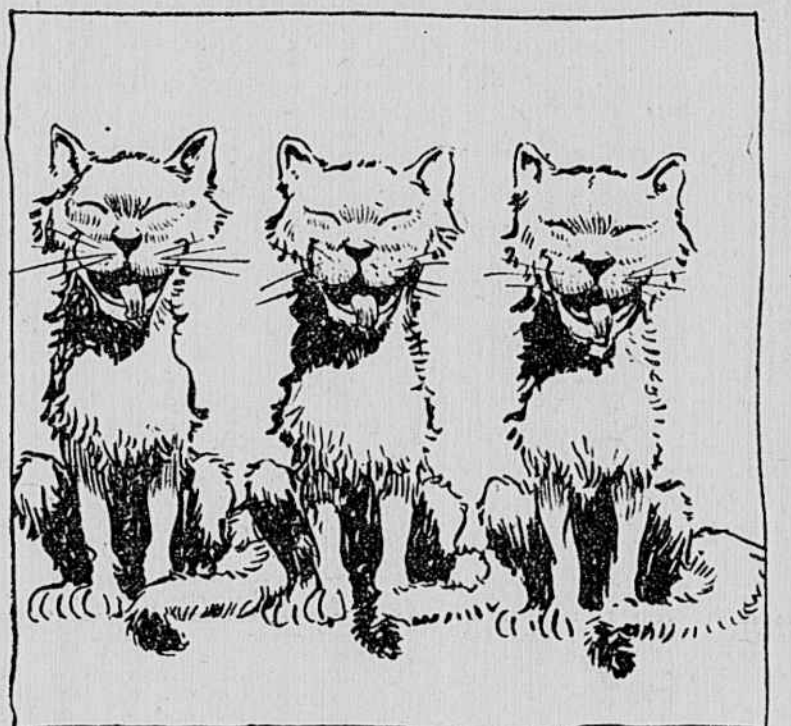
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Picture No. 46 Date, September 10th.



What Book Does This Picture Represent?
Write Title and Name of Author in Form Below

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TOTAL NUMBER OF PICTURES, 77. Contest began July 27th. Each day a different picture appears in this space. Cut them out. Save them until the last picture appears on October 11th. Don't send in partial lists. Wait until you have all the answers to the 77. Read Rules, Daily Story and Special Announcements in another part of this paper. It will help you win a prize. Extra pictures and coupons of any date that have appeared may be had at 2c. Enter to-day without registering your name. Merely Save Pictures and Coupons as they appear.

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....., 1913.

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